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SUBJECT: MACEDONIA: NEW GOVERNMENT LINEUP

REF: SKOPJE 464 AND PREVIOUS

¶1. (U) Summary: In the absence of the opposition parties, the Macedonian Parliament approved the new VMRO-DPMNE/DUI coalition on July 26. Much of the new cabinet lineup is familiar, with many key officials returning for a second term. This message provides biographical information for the new Government. End Summary.

¶2. (U) On July 26, the newly elected 120-seat Macedonian Parliament approved the VMRO-DPMNE) DUI coalition Government in a 77-0 vote. Opposition SDSM-led Sonce coalition and VMRO-DPMNE,s former ethnic-Albanian coalition partner DPA remained absent from Parliament in protest (reftel).

¶3. (U) PM Gruevski expressed his confidence that the new Government will succeed in achieving the five key strategic priorities of its program -- economic growth and competitiveness, improving employment opportunities and standards of living, EU and NATO integration including resolution of the name dispute with Greece, combating crime and corruption, and full implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement -- saying &the new Government will fulfill everything within the program and realize all envisaged reforms, aimed at raising the living quality of Macedonia's citizens."

¶4. (U) The &new8 cabinet lineup is mostly familiar, with Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Justice, Finance, Agriculture and Transportation remaining unchanged, as well as the Deputy PM for Economic Issues. New coalition partner DUI takes the Ministries of Local Self-Government, Health, Economy, Labor and Social Affairs, and Environment, as well as a Deputy PM slot for Implementation of the Framework Agreement. One new Ministry, that of the Information Society, has been formed by the new Government. PM Gruevski called his new team of ministers &a merger of youth and experience, but primarily people of exceptional values, individuals who are required to work with honesty, transparency and accountability.8

BIOGRAPHIES FOR THE GOVERNMENT

¶5. (SBU) Deputy Prime Minister for Economy: Zoran Stavreski (VMRO-DPMNE) was born in Skopje in 1965, and continues for a second term in his position as DPM covering economic issues.

His dominance on economic issues and tight links to the PM limited the role of the Ministers of Economy and Finance during the last mandate. Stavreski received his MA from the Faculty of Economics at Skopje University, and served between 1993 and 2000 as first an Advisor and then the Head of the Research Bureau at the National Bank of Macedonia. In 2001 Stavreski became an Undersecretary at the Ministry of Finance. In the period 2001-2006, he held various positions at the World Bank. Stavreski speaks good English.

¶16. (SBU) Deputy Prime Minister for Euro-Integration: Ivica Bocevski (VMRO-DPMNE) was born in Skopje in 1977, and takes up the DPM slot from his previous position as Spokesperson of the Government, which he held from March of 2007. He graduated from the School of Political Studies at the University of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Skopje in 1999 and from 2002 to 2004 studied public and international affairs as a Ron Brown Scholar. Founder and Executive Director of the Institute for Democracy in Skopje, Bocevski formerly served as Chief of Staff to a Vice President of SDSM and in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Following participation in the IV program as a member of the SDSM youth Organization, Bocevski made a political U-turn and joined VMRO-DPMNE. Bocevski is one of the drafters of the Lustration Law. He speaks fluent English.

¶17. (SBU) Deputy Prime Minister for Implementation of the Framework Agreement: Abdilaqim Ademi (DUI) was born in 1969 in Jegunovce, near Tetovo. A graduate of the Faculty of Polytechnics of the University of Tirana, Albania, he most recently served as the Chief of Staff for DUI leader Ali Ahmeti. Ademi served as an MP from 2002 to 2006, as the chairman of the parliamentary committee on economic issues, as well as member of the committees on interethnic relations, finance and budget, transport, communications, and environment. Ademi also worked as assistant professor at the State University of Tetovo. He speaks Macedonian in addition to his native Albanian, but does not speak English.

¶18. (SBU) Minister of Foreign Affairs: Antonijo Milososki (VMRO-DPMNE) was born in Tetovo in 1976, and continues for a second term as Foreign Minister. A longtime influential member of VMRO-DPMNE, Milososki was spokesperson of the VMRO-DPMNE-led government from May 2000 to September 2001, a period including the country's internal conflict in 2001. After leaving his position as spokesperson in 2001, Milososki went to Germany to pursue a Master's degree in European Integration at Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universitaet in Bonn. In 2002 he began work on a Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of Duisburg. He has yet to complete his dissertation on Macedonian-Greek relations. A graduate of Skopje University Law School, Milososki was previously known as a nationalist with hard-line views, leading protests against Albanian language instruction at Skopje University. Local observers say his views have moderated since those days. However many still see him as the face of government during the 2001 conflict. He is a regular columnist in the daily "Dnevnik" and has been active in many Euro-Atlantic leadership forums and conferences. Milososki speaks English well.

¶19. (SBU) Minister of Defense: Zoran Konjanovski (VMRO-DRMNE) was born in Bitola in 1967, and will serve for the first time as Minister of Defense. A member of VMRO-DPMNE Executive Committee, Konjanovski served as Minister of Local Self-Government in 2006, where he was praised as an able administrator. Following his tenure as Minister of Local Self-Government, he served as an Interim Manager of REK Bitola, a thermo-electric power plant. A graduate of the School of Mechanical Engineering at Kliment Ohridski University, Konjanovski speaks only basic English. Konjanovski is a captain first class, having attended the school for reserve officers while serving the Yugoslav National Army.

¶10. (SBU) Minister of Interior: Gordana Jankuloska (VMRO-DPMNE) was born in Ohrid in 1975, and continues for a second term in her position. A graduate of the Law School

of the University of Saints Cyril and Methodius in 1999, she holds a master's degree in International Commercial Law from the University of Kent, Canterbury. Confidante of Prime Minister Gruevski, she had a career in the Ministry of Finance and as Secretary General of VMRO-DPMNE prior to assuming the office of Minister of Interior in 2006. Jankuloska visited the US in 2005 as an IV program participant; she speaks fluent English.

¶11. (SBU) Minister of Justice: Mihajlo Manevski (VMRO-DPMNE) was born near Veles in 1937 and continues for a second consecutive term as Minister of Justice, and also served in that capacity in 1986-1991. Manevski also had a long career in the Public Prosecutor's Office, having served as a Deputy Public Prosecutor at the Regional Public Prosecutor's Office in Skopje, Deputy Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Macedonia, and President of the Regional Court in Skopje. He also served from 1994 to 2000 as a state counselor in the Government. Manevski was elected to the State Commission for the Prevention of Corruption in 2002, and has served as its president since 2006. Manevski does not speak English.

¶12. (SBU) Minister of Finance: Trajko Slaveski (VMRO-DPMNE) was born in Ohrid in 1960 and continues for a second term as Minister of Finance. Slaveski's political career includes serving as Vice-President of VMRO-DPMNE since 2004, advisor to the former Minister of Finance Nikola Gruevski and national coordinator for preparation of the National Poverty Reduction Strategy from November 2000 to September 2002, and Minister of Development from 1999 to 2000. He earned his BA in 1983, his MA in 1988, and his Ph.D. in 1997 at the Faculty of Economy of the University of Saints Cyril and Methodius. He did graduate work at the California State University in Chico (1986-87) and Harvard University (1989-90). Since 2003, Slaveski has been an Associate Professor at Skopje University's Faculty of Economy. He was a visiting professor at the Arizona State University in 1997. Since 1999 he has taught a graduate course at the National and Capodistrian University in Athens, Greece. He is fluent in English.

¶13. (SBU) Minister of Local Self-Government: Musa Xhaferi (DUI) was born in Kicevo in 1959, and serves for the first time as Minister of Local Self-Government. He is a founding member of the ethnic Albanian Democratic Union for Integration (DUI) and was Deputy Prime Minister for Political Systems during DUI's tenure as part of the ruling coalition government from 2002 to 2006, monitoring Framework Agreement implementation. Following his graduation from Pristina University's Economic Affairs Department in 1984, he moved to Switzerland and joined the politically active Albanian Diaspora and completed a master's degree in economics at the University of Zurich in 1995. During the 2001 conflict, he was the National Liberation Army's principal political representative in Western Europe. Xhaferi pursued post-graduate studies in adult education in Lucerne in 2000. Xhaferi speaks Macedonian, but does not speak English.

¶14. (SBU) Minister of Economy: Fatmir Besimi (DUI) was born in Tetovo in 1975. This is Besimi's second term as Minister of Economy, a role he will leave his position with the World Bank in Kosovo to resume. He first assumed the post in November 2004 following a year of service as a Vice-Governor of the National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia. He teaches economics at Tetovo University and is a member of the Tetovo University Senate. Besimi served as director of the public enterprise for airport services, JPAU Macedonia, from November 2002 until August 2003. He worked as a researcher for the National Bank in 2001 and at Stopanska Bank's Tetovo branch in 2000. He completed his Bachelor's and Master's degrees at the School of Economy in Skopje and holds a Ph.D. in Monetary Economics from the Staffordshire University in Great Britain. Besimi speaks fluent English.

¶15. (SBU) Minister of Education: Pero Stojanovski (VMRO-DPMNE) was born in Skopje in 1970, where he graduated from the School of Electrical Engineering at the University of Saints Cyril and Methodius. Stojanovski was promoted to

his ministerial position from his previous role as State Secretary in the same ministry. Prior to his service in the Education Ministry, Stojanovski worked as a project assistant at an engineering company, an instructor in mathematics and information science in a private school, and an administrator and teacher in an experimental teaching project at a public secondary school. He speaks basic English.

¶16. (SBU) Minister of Labor and Social Policy: Xhelal Bajrami (DUI) was born in Kumanovo in 1973. A Law School graduate, Bajrami passed the bar exam in 2008. He previously worked as an intern in the Kumanovo Basic Court, taught at a high school in Kumanovo, and worked as a lawyer or a public enterprise that built and maintained roadways in 2006-2007. English language ability not known.

¶17. (SBU) Minister of Health: Bujar Osmani (DUI) was born in 1979, and is a medical doctor serving for the first time in the government. A 2004 graduate of Skopje Medical School, Osmani completed a specialization in general surgery in 2006. He then enrolled in professional training in Liver Tissue Engineering in London until November 2007. Osmani speaks English well.

¶18. (SBU) Minister of Culture: Elizabeta Kanceska-Milevska (VMRO-DPMNE) was born in Veles in 1970, and comes to the Minister of Culture position from her position as State Secretary in the same ministry. A graduate of the School of Sociology at the University of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Skopje, she holds a Master's degree in European studies, concentrating in societal protection of cultural heritage sites. Kanceska-Milevska does not speak English.

¶19. (SBU) Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning: Nexhati Jakupi (DUI) was born in 1973. A physician, Jakupi graduated from the Medical School at the University in Sofia, Bulgaria. He specialized in general surgery at the University of Skopje in 2005. Jakupi is moving to the Ministerial Office from his position as City Councilor in Gostivar. English language ability not known.

¶20. (SBU) Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Waterways: Aco Spasenovski (Socialist Party) was born in Kicevo in 1969, and serves for a second time as Minister of Agriculture. A graduate of the School of Agriculture at the University of Skopje, he has been a private entrepreneur for most of his career. From 1994-1996 he owned a dairy, through 1997 he worked in a pharmacy, from 1997-1999 he worked as a field adviser in the World Bank Office in Skopje, and from 1999 through 2006 he ran his own agricultural consulting firm. He speaks English and knows some Albanian.

¶21. (SBU) Minister of Transport and Telecommunication: Mile Janakieski (VMRO-DPMNE) was born in Prilep in 1978, and is serving his second term as Minister of Transport and Telecommunication. He received a BA in Management and Business Administration from the American College in Thessaloniki and is currently enrolled in postgraduate studies at Skopje University. A member of the Central Committee of VMRO-DPMNE, Janakieski was Director General of the water supply public enterprise in Skopje in 2005-2006. He previously worked as an assistant manager in the State Foreign Currency Inspectorate of the Ministry of Finance, an assistant manager in the Sector for Macro Economy and Development Policy, and as Chief of Cabinet of the Minister of Finance. He speaks English well.

¶22. (SBU) Minister of Information Society: Ivo Ivanovski (VMRO-DPMNE) was born in Bitola in 1978, and is the first to take the helm of this newly-formed Ministry. Ivanovski already has Government experience in IT issues, as he served as Minister without portfolio focusing on information society issues since 2006. Ivanovski graduated from Ohio State University in 2003 with a Master's in Hardware Engineering. During his eleven-year stay in the U.S., Ivanovski was an active member of the Macedonian-American Friendship Association. He started his career in 1997 as an IT specialist and later served as IT Manager for the Plaskolite Company, a Plexiglas producer. Ivanovski speaks English

well.

¶23. (SBU) Minister without Portfolio: Vele Samak (VMRO-DPMNE) was born in 1974 in Prilep. He was first appointed as a minister without portfolio in 2006 and will continue in that role for a second term -- focusing on attracting foreign investment. Samak previously worked as a product manager at Microsoft and as a VP at Citigroup. Samak holds a BA from the University of Chicago (1996) and an MBA from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania (2005). While at Wharton, he and a group of students started the company TerraPass which uses market mechanisms to help customers offset the carbon dioxide emissions of their vehicles. A former Secretary of the Macedonian-American Friendship Association, Samak speaks fluent English.

¶24. (SBU) Minister without Portfolio: Nezdhet Mustafa (United Party for Emancipation) was born in Skopje in 1962 and is serving for the first time in the Government. In 1994 he founded the first Roma party in Macedonia, and serves as the President of its successor party-- the United Party for Emancipation. He is a graduate of the School of Philosophy at the University of Saints Cyril and Methodius. With the exception of a brief stint as an editor for Macedonian National Television, Mustafa has continuously worked in politics. He was Mayor of Suto Orizari, the largest Roma municipality in Europe, from 1996-2000 and has been a Member of Parliament since 2002. He does not speak English.

¶25. (SBU) Minister without Portfolio: Hadi Neziri (Democratic Party of the Turks in Macedonia) was born in Zdunje, near Gostivar, and serves for the first time in the government. He is a 1979 graduate of the School of Electrical Engineering at the University of Pristina. He worked in electrical power plants for most of his career, until 2006, when he was elected a Member of Parliament from the ranks of the Democratic Park of the Turks. English language ability not known.

Milovanovic